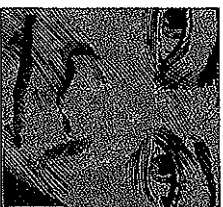


DO YOU KNOW A VICTIM OR WITNESS OF



VIOLENCE

- Assault
- Sexual
- Threat

ACCIDENT

- Crash
- Fall
- Burn

SUDDEN LOSS

- Security
- Abilities
- Self-image

DEATH

- Vulnerable
- Loved Ones
- Confronted

POST TRAUMA

SYNDROME is a normal, expected response to overwhelming danger and/or sudden loss of control or security. Although not every trauma leads to Post Trauma Syndrome, many survivors and witnesses of highly traumatic events find their lives affected even years after the incident has passed. Direct and indirect victims may have memories that they can't "just forget," feelings of anger, frustration, and fears of danger and losing control. Some survivors even find their changed feelings, behaviors and life style affecting their family, friends, and others.

DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE TROUBLED BY



ANGER

- Guilt
- Arguing
- Distrust
- Impulsive

ANXIETY

- Startle
- Vigilant
- New Fears
- Nightmares

DEPRESSION

- Confusion
- Poor Sleep
- Fears/Doubts
- Mind Wanders

WITHDRAWAL

- Bad Self-image
- "Numb" Inside
- More Isolated

While these feelings and behaviors can

come from several sources, people who have experienced or witnessed traumatic events often have many of the above reactions. Some victims may not even connect their current problems with a trauma that might be long passed. In addition, survivors often find that certain sights, sounds, smells, places, times, feelings, or dreams can trigger:

- Intensive, vivid memories
- Sudden, strong feelings
- New physical reactions
- Fear of trauma repeating

LONG TERM EFFECTS

POST TRAUMA SYNDROME

often affects other parts of a survivor's life. With time, new problems can be created or pre-trauma difficulties aggravated.

RELATIONSHIPS

Anger, withdrawal, poor self-image and new fears can increase the mutual discomfort, isolation, and the chance of separation or divorce.

EMPLOYMENT

Anger, poor concentration and distrust can hurt performance, teamwork, job satisfaction and overall career progress.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Some victims use alcohol or drugs to self-medicate problems with sleep, anger, isolation or new fears.

HEALTH

The chronic stress of Post Trauma Syndrome can aggravate any pre-trauma problem areas or create new physical problems.

LEGAL

Substance abuse, depression, anger and frustration increase the likelihood of self-destructive or irresponsible behaviors.

TREATMENT

Although often unhelped by general therapy, POST TRAUMA SYNDROME and its effects usually fade under the care of a specialist. Treatment is usually brief, depending on the:

- nature of the trauma
- time since the trauma
- victim's prior strengths
- support system involvement

INDIVIDUAL SESSIONS

are for information, goal setting, exploring the trauma, important feelings and teaching new skills.

FAMILY SESSIONS

provide information, clarify expectations, improve mutual support and communicate feelings and needs.

GROUP SESSIONS

reduce isolation, provide mutual support, validation, valuable feedback and the opportunity to practice new skills.

REFERENCES

are available for medications, alcohol/drug abuse programs, long-term therapy, career counseling and other needs.

FROM VICTIM TO SURVIVOR

*I have been victimized.
I was in a fight that was unfair.
I did not ask for it.
There is no shame in losing such fights
only in winning them.
I have reached the status of survivor
and need not be a victim.
I look ahead with hope, not despair.
I may never forget
but I need not constantly dwell
I was a victim.
I am a survivor!*

—Adapted from F. Oehberg, MD

RESOURCES

The Office of Crime Victims Advocacy helps crime victims obtain needed services and resources; administers grant programs for sexual assault treatment and prevention services; assists communities in planning and implementing services for crime victims; and advises local and state governments of practices, policies and priorities which impact crime victims. OCVA is administered by the Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development.

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POST-TRAUMA SYNDROME



THE PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF TRAUMA

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